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OCR: Discrimination Complaint Form

OCR Online Complaint Form System Maintenance

The OCR Online Complaint Form will be down for maintenance:
December 12th, 2024 from 6pm to 12am EST
Complainants will be unable to file complaints online at this time however, they may still file complaints by email/mail using the Fillable PDF Complaint Form.

We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause during this time.

OCR CORRESPONDENCE NOTIFICATION

The majority of OCR staff are working remotely because of the pandemic. Therefore, to ensure receipt of your correspondence, please consider emailing **(OCR@ed.gov)** or faxing (202-453-6012) it to our office, where it will receive immediate attention. If neither of these options are available to you, mail your correspondence to the address below, and we will process it as soon as conditions allow. You may also contact us at 800-421-3481 or **OCR@ed.gov** to confirm receipt of your correspondence.

U.S. Department of Education
Office for Civil Rights
Lyndon Baines Johnson Department of Education Bldg
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-1100

Filing a Complaint >>

Overview

This page provides specific and detailed information that will assist you in filing a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) at the Department of Education. Please read all of the information below before continuing on to the complaint form. Additional information is available at How OCR Handles Complaints and Questions and Answers on OCR's Complaint Process.

OCR has the authority to investigate complaints claiming a covered entity discriminated based on:

- race, color, national origin, ethnicity, or ancestry, including a person's
    - limited English proficiency or English learner status; and
    - actual or perceived shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics, including membership in a religion that may be perceived to exhibit such characteristics (such as Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, and Sikh individuals)

- sex or gender, including
    - pregnancy or parental status;
    - sex stereotypes (such as treating persons differently because they do not conform to sex-role expectations or because they are attracted to or are in relationships with persons of the same sex)
- disability, including those currently without an impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, but who have a record of or are regarded as having a disability; and
- age.

OCR also has the authority to investigate complaints claiming a covered entity:

- retaliated for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege protected by the laws enforced by OCR;
- retaliated because someone made a complaint, testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in an OCR matter; and
- discriminated against any youth group officially affiliated with a group or organization listed in title 36 of the United States Code (as a patriotic society) that is intended to serve young people under the age of 21 that requests to conduct a meeting at a public school.

Covered entities include all public and private programs that receive Federal funds from the U.S. Department of Education. These include all public schools and most public and private colleges, as well as some other entities, such as vocational rehabilitation agencies and libraries. For claims of disability discrimination (including disability-related retaliation), covered entities also include all state and local government entities, even if they do not receive Federal funds.

If you believe you have been discriminated or retaliated against on any of these bases by a covered entity, you may file a complaint using either the electronic complaint form or the fillable PDF complaint form linked at the bottom of this page.

If you choose to file a complaint using either method, you will be asked to provide your name, address, and email address; the name and address of the person discrim against; and the name and address of the entity you believe discriminated.

You also will be asked which of the kinds of discrimination forms the basis for your complaint. You will need to provide a description of the conduct that you believe is discriminatory.

By law, complaints of discrimination must ordinarily be filed within 180 days of the last act of discrimination. If your complaint involves matters that occurred longer ago than this and you are requesting a waiver, you will be asked to show good cause why you did not file your complaint within the 180-day period.

You will be asked whether you have tried to resolve the matter using a grievance procedure or by filing with another agency.

In addition to the complaint, a signed **Consent Form** may be required. When disclosure of the identity of the complainant is necessary in order to resolve the complaint, OCR will require written consent before proceeding. The complainant will be informed that the complaint will be closed if written consent is necessary in order to resolve the complaint and is not received within 20 calendar days of the date of the acknowledgement letter or the date the Consent Form is requested from the complainant. The signed Consent Form may be submitted to OCR by mail, fax, email (with a scanned attachment), or in person.

When OCR has determined that consent is necessary in order to resolve the complaint and OCR has not received a signed Consent Form by the 15th calendar day of the date of the acknowledgment letter or the date the Consent Form is requested from the complainant, OCR will contact the complainant (e.g., by phone) to inform the complainant that the complaint will be closed if the signed Consent Form is not received within 5 calendar days. If OCR does not receive signed written Consent Form, the complaint will be dismissed, and the complainant informed in writing.

A complainant on behalf of or regarding to another person(s) is responsible for securing any necessary written consent from that individual, including when a parent files for a student over the age of 18. Where the person is a minor (under the age of 18) or a legally incompetent adult, the Consent Form must be signed by that person's parent or legal guardian. Parental or legal guardian consent may not be required for persons ur he

age of 18 if they are emancipated under state law and are therefore considered to have obtained majority. Proof of emancipation or incompetence must be provided.

If you submit the completed electronic complaint form, it will be routed to the OCR office with authority to handle complaints in the state where the institution or entity you are complaining about is located. A staff person will contact you once your electronic complaint has been received and reviewed.

If you select the fillable PDF complaint form, once you complete the complaint form and Consent Form, you should print them out, sign them; and mail them (or email scanned copies of the signed forms) to the Enforcement Office with authority for the state where the institution or entity you are complaining about is located. A staff person will contact you once your complaint has been received and reviewed.

You may now continue to either the electronic complaint form or the fillable PDF complaint form, or you may abandon the form and return to the OCR Complaint Process page.

Continue to Electronic Complaint Form or Fillable PDF Complaint Form PDF (400.9K)

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- 情况说明书

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- 한국어

  (Korean) PDF (1.6M)
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- Tagalog (Tagalog) PDF (1.6M)
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Office for Civil Rights (OCR)

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